



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
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USDA PROPOSES TO CHANGE THE DISEASE STATUS OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA WITH REGARD TO FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE AND RINDERPEST

WASHINGTON, March 30, 2009--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is proposing to amend regulations to add the Republic of Korea to the list of regions that are considered free of rinderpest and foot-and-mouth disease (FMD).

The proposed regulations would update the disease status of the Republic of Korea with regard to rinderpest and FMD while continuing to protect the United States from an introduction of those diseases by providing additional requirements for meat and other animal products imported into the United States from the Republic of Korea.

At the request of the Republic of Korea, APHIS conducted a risk assessment and concluded that the Republic of Korea is free of rinderpest and FMD, and has the veterinary infrastructure in place to detect and effectively eradicate the disease if necessary. The rule would remove certain rinderpest and FMD-related prohibitions and restrictions on the importation of ruminants, or fresh meat or other products of ruminants, from the Republic of Korea into the United States. However, while eligible under APHIS regulations related to rinderpest and FMD, swine and swine products would not be eligible for import from the Republic of Korea due to USDA regulations designed to prevent the introduction of diseases other than rinderpest and FMD, such as classical swine fever. Imported products must also follow USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service regulations for food safety and labeling.

Rinderpest and FMD are highly contagious viral diseases. Rinderpest is not transmissible to humans and does not affect human health. FMD is only rarely transmitted to humans, and with great difficulty. APHIS has a strong system in place for detecting and responding to outbreaks of foreign animal diseases and places trade restrictions on affected regions to protect against the introduction of diseases of concern.

This action is published in the March 30 *Federal Register*.

Consideration will be given to comments received on or before May 29. Send two copies of postal mail or commercial delivery comments to Docket No. APHIS-2008-0147, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Comments can be submitted on the Federal eRulemaking portal at <http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=DocketDetail&d=APHIS-2008-0147>.

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Comments are posted on the Regulations.gov Web site and also can be reviewed at USDA, Room 1141, South Building, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. To facilitate entry into the comment reading room, please call (202) 690-2817.

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